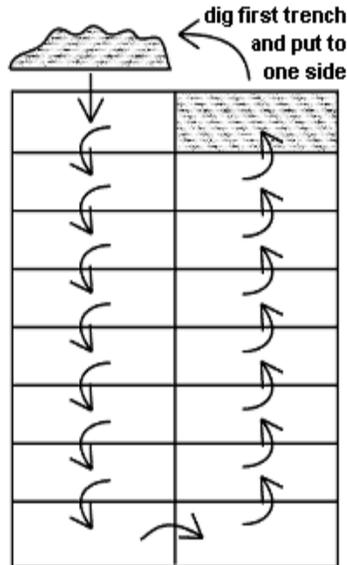


Double Digging - May help with drainage problems

When double digging the soil is cultivated to a depth of two spits. This technique is good on land which hasn't been cultivated before or where a hard sub-soil layer is impeding drainage and the penetration of plant roots. Double digging improves the friability of the sub-soil without bringing it near the surface, so the richer layer of the top soil is always closest to the young roots of cultivated plants.



1. If you have a large area to dig divide it into two equal areas. Then you can dig to one end and work back down the other side to finish where you began.
2. Take out a trench the width and depth of a spade and move the soil adjacent to where the final trench will be.
3. Once all the soil has been removed from the first trench, fork over the base of the trench.
4. Compost or manure can be evenly spread over the base of the trench.
5. Dig and throw forward the soil adjacent to the trench. Make sure the soil is turned over and perennial weeds are removed.
6. When a depth of a spit of soil has been thrown forward into the first trench a second trench will have been created and the base of this is forked over.
7. Continue the cycle until you get to the final trench and once the base has been forked over fill this in with the soil from the first trench.

The best time to double dig is in autumn or winter during a frost free and relatively dry period, this will allow the winter frosts to help breakdown the soil ready for spring planting. Clay soils are best being double dug because it will improve the drainage of the soil. Never dig clay soil when it's really wet and sticky as your weight will compress the clay into hard lumps.

Online Liverpool Allotments Group

Please join up to the first ever on-line Liverpool allotment community where you can share photos of your plot, recipes, gardening tips, ideas and pick up some good tips.

http://flickr.com/groups/liverpool_allotments

Copies of the new Kings Seed Catalogues are now available from the office and Stores



THE PLOT



THE ASHFIELD ALLOTMENTS NEWS LETTER

www.ashfield-allotments.btik.com

No.4

October 2008

Open Day and Flower Show Success

On Saturday 16th August we held our first ever open day. We were visited by many people and had produce & plants on sale, a raffle, tea and cakes and a barbecue. We managed to raise over £400 pounds on the day and thanks go to the many members who helped to run stalls on the day, cooked food on the barbecue, donated produce & raffle prizes and made cakes.

We also held a flower show which had nearly 150 exhibits in it. We haven't held a flower show for nearly ten years and we were very pleased that so many plot holders entered. Congratulations go to George Holmes who won best exhibit in Vegetable Section Maureen Coackley who won best exhibit in Flower Section Sue Johnson who won best exhibit in Novice Section Daniel Barrington who won most points in the show

It was a very successful day and everybody seemed to enjoy themselves, it was great to see so many people taking an interest in our allotments. I'm sure next year will be even bigger and better.



Wind Turbine

We have recently ordered a wind turbine which will provide power to our office/stores. This has been funded by Liverpool Primary Care Trust.

Please visit our website
www.ashfield-allotments.btik.com

Site Development Works

The Communal Allotment Project

The project is now nearly completed we now have all the raised beds and pathways built. Another Polytunnel is going to be erected on part of Plot 57. We are now going to be working with Liverpool Primary Care Trust to get local groups and schools using the allotment. We raised just under £30,000 to fund the project from Liverpool City Council, Liverpool Primary Care Trust, 5 A Day Growing Schemes & Neighbourhood Renewal Cleaner, Safer, Greener Fund. Special thanks go to George Holmes for all the hard work he has carried out on the project building raised beds & polytunnels, laying pathways and planting borders.

Back of the Site

In the past few months several new plots have been taken and most members are doing very well. Some of this area had not been cultivated for years, so double digging and raised beds are recommended.

We are now developing 5 more plots (1 full plot and 4 half plots) at the back of the site. Not all of the area will be suitable to be cultivated as plots so we are working with Liverpool City Council to come up with a plan for the rest of the area. Suggestions up to now are Wildflower area, orchard, bog gardens, pond, planting willow & picnic areas. If you have any ideas see a member of the Committee.

Green Pennant & Britain in Bloom Awards

Following on from our success this year when we won 'Best Overall Allotment Site' in the Liverpool Allotments Competition we plan to enter the Green Pennant Award and Britain in Bloom Award. Some allotment sites in Liverpool have already won an award from Britain in Bloom so I'm sure we'll have a good chance of winning something. No allotments in Liverpool have won Green Pennant status and it'd be a great achievement if we could be the first to win it in the Councils 'Year of the Environment'.

To win these awards we need the support and contribution of all plot holders. You can do this by keeping your plots cultivated & tidy, don't store rubbish, consider planting a border of flowers at the front of your plot or put up a hanging basket. We will provide all plot holders with more information at the start of next year.

Ashfield Allotments woodland area



Behind Plots 60,61, 50, 44 & 43 & next to the Thingwall House site is a small area of woodland. It was previously used as a dumping ground and was cleared last year by Liverpool City Council. This area has the potential to be a real haven for wildlife and birds. We plan to develop this area by planting wild narcissus, native bluebells, snow drops, evening primrose, fox gloves, red campion, stitchwort & pimpernel. We will also plan erect bird

& Bat boxes and Create an insect tower. If you are interested in getting involved in this project or have any other ideas please see Daniel.

Annual General Meeting

We had our AGM on 5th October. The Chairman John Byrne & Secretary Daniel Barrington were again nominated and, after some discussion, agreed to stay on, but on condition that fewer demands were made on their time. Surprisingly some plott holders commented that there was not enough information available about what's going on. We would therefore, again, remind people to read the notice boards, look at the displays in the office, read the newsletters & visit the website as there is a lot of information available you just need to look at it. A lot of time and effort is spent preparing this information.

Committee & Officers

John Byrne Chairman -Plot 42 Officer
Daniel Barrington Secretary Plot 68 Officer
Joe Roper Treasurer Plot 46 Officer
George Holmes Storekeeper Plot 67/60 Committee Member
Colin Langeveld Membership Plot 25 Committee Member
Christine Quirke Plot 23 Committee Member
Anne Byrne Plot 42 Committee Member
Marge McCartney Plot 72A Committee Member
Jenny Scully Plot 1B Auditor

Fires On Allotments

We have recently had some complaints from neighbouring houses regarding fires on the allotments.

Official Guidelines from Liverpool City Council -

No fires are permitted between 1st March to 30th October

If you are going to burn anything you must ensure that it will not cause a nuisance to any other plott holders or neighbouring houses.

Stores

George Holmes on Plots 67 & 60 is now the new Storekeeper if you need anything from the stores they will be open at 10.00am—1.00pm every Saturday & Sunday. The onion sets were popular this year and we will be selling them again next year. We now have green netting in stock at £1.00 per metre by 2 metres.

Reminders

The gates must be locked at all times

Plot holders should not park their cars on the main pathway. A car may be taken down to deliver items but MUST be returned to the car park area.

You must not water your plot with a hose

Please show consideration to other plot holders, do not go on to another person's plot without their permission.

STORES

Please use our Stores—the prices are competitive with a wide range of items. Any Small Profit we make is helpful to our funds. See Notice board for details and price list.

NOTICE BOARDS

Please read the notice boards they are updated regularly with important information that all plot holders should know.